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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, April 11, 2016, at 3:30 p.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2016

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Gracious God, each blessing we receive is a gift from You. Thank You for the blessings of life, liberty, and love. Thank You also for the blessing of salvation that we receive by grace through faith.

Today, empower our Senators to live a life rooted in Your grace. Liberate them from guilt, fear, and division. Give them the wisdom to rely on Your love as they seek to live faithfully for Your glory. May the good they accomplish because of You lead them away from pride or boasting. May they always point to You as the source of all that is good.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the bipartisan FAA Reauthorization Act is the product of a collaborative committee process in the Senate that is back to work. It was guided and informed by a series of substantive committee hearings. It contains ideas from committee members on both sides of the aisle, and because both Republicans and Democrats were given a stake in the outcome, it passed the Commerce Committee on a voice vote.

Senator THUNE is the chair of that committee and Senator AYOTTE is the chair of the committee's aviation panel. We recognize key players like these for their many months of hard work, hearings, and collaboration. We recognize the ranking members, Senators NELSON and CANTWELL, and committee members from both sides for their contributions as well.

The bipartisan FAA Reauthorization Act will support American jobs and help American manufacturing. It will improve safety in the skies and security in our airports. It contains commonsense reforms for passengers too. In fact, a consumer columnist for the

Washington Post dubbed it "one of the most passenger-friendly FAA reauthorization bills in a generation." For instance, to the extent an airline charges fees for things such as baggage or cancellations or changes, this bill will help ensure they provide it in a clear, standard format that people can actually understand. It will allow passengers to get refunds for services they purchased but didn't receive, like when they have been charged a bag fee and the bag doesn't make it. It will give passengers more peace of mind when they travel, directing the FAA to update the contents of the onboard emergency medical kits, and it will maintain rural access in States like Kentucky.

The bipartisan FAA Reauthorization Act achieves all of this without imposing the kind of overregulation that takes away choices from consumers and threatens service. It does everything I mentioned without raising taxes or fees on travelers. It is a balanced bill, but that doesn't mean some colleagues won't have ideas or amendments they would like to have considered. For instance, in the wake of incidents like we saw in Brussels, I know some have expressed interest in security-related amendments. But in order to even have an opportunity to work through additional ideas or amendments, we must first get on the bill. After talking to the Democratic leader, I am optimistic we will do that in a few hours.

If colleagues are serious about having the opportunity for amendments of any kind, here is what it means today: Let's continue doing our job. We will

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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